

COUNTRY DATA: AFGHANISTAN : Information from the CIA World Factbook

INTRODUCTION

Ahmad Shah Durrani unified the Pashtun tribes and founded Afghanistan in 1747. The country served as a buffer between the British and Russian Empires until it won independence from notional British control in 1919. A brief experiment in democracy ended in a 1973 coup and a 1978 Communist counter-coup. The Soviet Union invaded in 1979 to support the tottering Afghan Communist regime, touching off a long and destructive war. The USSR withdrew in 1989 under relentless pressure by internationally supported anti-Communist mujahedin rebels. A series of subsequent civil wars saw Kabul finally fall in 1996 to the Taliban, a hardline Pakistani-sponsored movement that emerged in 1994 to end the country's civil war and anarchy. Following the 11 September 2001 terrorist attacks in New York City and Washington D.C., a US, Allied, and anti-Taliban Northern Alliance military action toppled the Taliban sheltering Osama Bin Ladin. The UN-sponsored Bonn Conference in 2001 established a process for political reconstruction that included the adoption of a new constitution, a presidential election in 2004, and National Assembly elections in 2005. In December 2004, Hamid Karzai became the first democratically elected president of Afghanistan and the National Assembly was inaugurated the following December. Karzai was re-elected in August 2009 for a second term. Despite gains toward building a stable central government, a resurgent Taliban and continuing provincial instability- particularly in the south and the east- remain serious challenges for the Afghan Government.

GEOGRAPHY

Location	Southern Asia, north and west of Pakistan, east of Iran
Area	total: 652,230 sq km Land: 652,230 sq km Water: 0 sq km
Climate	arid and semiarid; cold winters and hot summers
Natural Resources	natural gas, petroleum, coal, copper, chromite, talc, barites, sulfur, lead, zinc, iron ore, salt, precious and semiprecious stones
Total Renewable Water Resources	65 cu km (1997)
Freshwater Withdrawal	total: 23.26 cu km/yr Per capita: 779 cu m/yr (2000)
Natural Hazards	damaging earthquakes occur in Hindu Kush mountains; flooding; droughts
Environmental Issues	limited natural fresh water resources; inadequate supplies of potable water; soil degradation; overgrazing; deforestation (much of the remaining forests are being cut down for fuel and

	building materials); desertification; air and water pollution
PEOPLE	
Population	29,835,392
Ethnic Groups	Pashtun 42%, Tajik 27%, Hazara 9%, Uzbek 9%, Aimak 4%, Turkmen 3%, Baloch 2%, other 4%
Religions	Sunni Muslim 80%, Shia Muslim 19%, other 1%
Languages	Afghan Persian or Dari (official) 50%, Pashto (official) 35%, Turkic languages (primarily Uzbek and Turkmen) 11%, 30 minor languages (primarily Balochi and Pashai) 4%, much bilingualism
Literacy Rate	total population: 28.1% Male: 43.1% Female: 12.6% (2000 est)
Major Infectious Diseases	
GOVERNMENT	
Type	Islamic republic
Independence	19 August 1919 (from UK control over Afghan foreign affairs)
Constitution	drafted 14 December 2003-4 January 2004; signed 16 January 2004; ratified 26 January 2004
Legal System	based on mixed civil and sharia law; has not accepted compulsory ICJ jurisdiction
ECONOMY	
Agricultural Products	opium, wheat, fruits, nuts; wool, mutton, sheepskins, lambskins
Industries	Small-scale production of textiles, soap, furniture, shoes, fertilizer, apparel, food-products, nonalcoholic beverages, mineral water, cement; handwoven carpets; natural gas, coal, copper
Import commodities	machinery and other capital goods, food, textiles, petroleum products
Import Partners	Pakistan 26.78%, US 24.81%, iNDIA 5.15%, gERMNAY 5.06%, rUSSIA 4.04% (2009)
Export Commodities	Opium, fruits and nuts, handwoven carpets, wool, cotton, hides and pelts, precious and semi-precious gems
Export Partners	US 26.47%, India 23.09%, Pakistan 17.36%, Tajikistan 12.51% (2009)
Per Capita GDP	\$1,000 (2010 est)

Population below poverty line	36%
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*CITATIONS: All information included above is extracted from the CIA World Factbook except where noted.

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General	
Life Expectancy at Birth (in years)	44.6
Average number of years in School (in years)	3.3
Gross National Income Per Capita (In US Dollars)	1419
Gender Inequality	
Female Seats in Parliament (%)	25.9
Population with at least a Secondary Education Female (% Of 25 and older)	5.8
Population with at least a Secondary Education Male (% Of 25 and older)	34.0
Labor Force Participation Female (%)	33.3
Labor Force Participation Male (%)	85.5
Births Attended by Skilled Health Professionals (%)	14
Poverty	
Population surviving on \$1.25 per day (%)	73.9
Empowerment	
Number of Journalists Imprisoned	0
Corruption Victims (% of people who face a bribe situation in the last year)	31
Political Engagement (% percent of people who voiced opinion to public officials)	22

Sustainability	
Fossil Fuels as Primary Energy Source (%)	..
Renewable Resources as Primary Energy Source (%)	..
Population without Access to Water (%)	52
Population Without Access to Sanitation Services (%)	63
Population affected by natural disasters (% between 2000-2009)	23,278
Human Security	
Number of Refugees leaving this country	2,833.1
Number of Internally Displaced People in This Country	240
Prevalence of Undernourishment (%)	..
Demographics	
Urban Residents (% of total Population)	22.6
Health	
HIV Prevalence in Female Youth (% ages 15-24)	..
HIV Prevalence in Male Youth (% ages 15-24)	..
HIV Prevalence in Adults (% ages 15-49)	..
Other	
Official Development Assistance Per Capita (in US dollars)	..
Population without Electricity (%)	85.6

